

County Wins Brownfield Assessment Grant

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Thursday that Clatsop County will receive a \$500,000 grant for a cleanup and reuse assessment of abandoned properties in Astoria and Seaside through the agency's Brownfield Program.

"Brownfields" are previously developed properties that are no longer in use and which may contain contaminants from former activities. The [EPA program](#) provides grants and technical assistance to communities, states, tribes and others to assess, safely clean up and sustainably reuse these properties.

Clatsop County's grant application identified two priority sites for attention. The Astoria site is a 20-acre tract that includes the former Blue Ridge housing complex in the east side of town. Built adjacent to a former military facility, it is believed to include old bunkers possibly containing munitions, as well as storage tanks, lead and asbestos.

The Seaside property is the site of a long-closed gas station and auto service shop that still contains underground fuel tanks, as well as possible other contaminants from the repair space.

Along with funding environmental assessments to guide cleanup planning, the grant also supports planning toward resale and redevelopment of the properties. The county's application specifies that the goal is to bring mixed-used development that would include workforce housing, in line with the county's goal to support the creation of affordable housing.

The project will also include opportunities for public input.